



Dakota Rural Action

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April 8, 2003

Country of Origin Labeling Program
Agricultural Marketing Service
USDA
Stop 0249
Room 2091-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0249

Dear Sir or Madam:

Re: Docket No. LS-02-13: Comments on Establishment of Guidelines for the Interim Voluntary Country of Origin Labeling of Beef, Lamb, Pork, Fish, Perishable Agricultural Commodities, and Peanuts Under the Authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946

On behalf of Dakota Rural Action (DRA), we are submitting comments on the Interim Voluntary Country of Origin Labeling Guidelines dated October 11, 2002. DRA is a grassroots membership group addressing agricultural issues important to independent livestock producers and consumers.

DRA is an affiliate of the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC). WORC is a network of grassroots organizations from seven states that include 7,000 members and 47 local community groups. Both DRA and WORC have worked on country of origin labeling for many years. DRA would like to endorse WORC's comments on the Interim Voluntary Country of Origin Labeling Guidelines. DRA and WORC have worked closely on this issue, and DRA agrees wholeheartedly with WORC's comments.

On behalf of DRA, we ask that the Agricultural Marketing Service make a strong commitment to farmers and ranchers through the proper implementation of country of origin labeling.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shirley Effling
Chair, Dakota Rural Action
Strandburg, SD

Ron Wieseler
Chair, DRA Ag & Food Issues Committee
Orient, SD